

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### J&M Plating

#### Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center

#### Workplace Organization Bolsters Productivity At J&M Plating

##### Client Profile:

J&M Plating offers automated, computer-controlled zinc and phosphate barrel plating and finishing services to the fastener industry. Major customers include Textron, Shakeproof (ITW), and Rockford Fastener. Located in Rockford, Illinois, the company employs less than 100 people.

##### Situation:

J&M Plating realizes that little things can make a big difference in capturing market share, and has begun implementing lean practices in its manufacturing spaces to gain a competitive edge. The initiative began when a negative review of the plant by a key customer, combined with a visit to the plant of a potential customer, made the president realize that J&M Plating had room to improve. The company asked the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center (IMEC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, to help improve efficiency and organization in the company's sorting and plating operations.

##### Solution:

IMEC began by introducing one of the basic tenets of successful lean deployment: the 5S (sort, set-in-order, shine, standardize, sustain) workplace organization program. 5S lays the groundwork for higher level improvements like quick changeover and mistake-proofing.

A key principle of 5S is the "30-second rule:" if an employee can't find the material, tool, or equipment in 30 seconds or less, productivity is adversely impacted and set-up times become longer. J&M Plating did not have the level of organization necessary for employees to find materials and tools in less than 30 seconds, nor did the shop floor have a good system of separating scrap from work-in-process inventory. IMEC led the company through a 5S implementation, and now tools are well-labeled and available to employees when and where they need them.

In the course of the 5S project, IMEC and the J&M Plating team found several air leaks in the company's sorting and plating machinery. Screens covering cooling fans had become plugged with dirt, preventing air flow to motors. Control panels were dirty and disorganized. These factors led to premature equipment failure and incurred costs associated with maintenance and replacement. IMEC worked with J&M Plating to clean the screens, service the equipment, and develop a standardized cleaning schedule to prevent future dirt build-ups.

##### Results:

Anticipating approximately \$3 million in cost-savings, productivity benefits, and retained business. Prepared for re-evaluation visit from key customer.

##### Testimonial:

[www.mep.nist.gov](http://www.mep.nist.gov)



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It really is 'dog-eat-dog' out there right now. [The Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center showed us that anything you can do to reduce prices and operate more efficiently will help you win business.

Mark Morris, President